

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Fiscal Year 2004

FY 04 was a busy year for DRB. The Board met with members of the Select Board as well as other boards in town such as: the Planning Board, Public Art Commission and the Historic Commission, to encourage these boards to begin to refer projects with an impact on public space to DRB for review. This collaboration has proved fruitful and useful to all.

Public Projects

Potwine Lane Recreation Area – The Amherst Leisure Services and Supplemental Education (LSSE) Department submitted final designs for the new soccer fields, adjacent parking, and signage at the Potwine Recreation Area for our review and comments.

Sidewalks in Downtown – DRB spent many evenings reviewing design and layout options for different portions of the downtown sidewalks. The continued development of the Boltwood Parking Garage area has provided many opportunities to positively shape the bordering streetscapes. The Board also considered other paving options as alternatives to materials used during Phase One of this development.

Boltwood Walk Sidewalks – The work on the northeast portion of the Bistro 63/Monkey Bar project gave us the opportunity to review proposed improvements to the fire lane access between this building and the Douglass Funeral Home.

Kendrick Park Development Proposal – As the Town moves ahead in the process of acquiring the land left in the Kendrick Trust, DRB has been busy planning a design process for the study phase of the park development. In the fall, a proposal for an in-depth study and program development was presented to the Select Board. Initial recommendations include the formation of a committee comprising members of various Town boards and the community, a public forum presenting relevant design options found in other similar public spaces, and a development process that would prepare program guidelines and oversee designer selection. This significant portion of downtown provides many opportunities for development as a gateway into the Town center. The parcel is a noteworthy public space that transitions between a potentially vibrant commercial track on the east and a family neighborhood on the west while becoming a virtual part of the network green and historical spaces located in the downtown area.

West Cemetery Improvements - DRB made final recommendations to the Amherst Public Art Commission on the proposed mural by artist David Fichter. Preliminary plans for lighting and signage improvements were also reviewed by the Board.

College Street Pedestrian Crossings – DRB reviewed the different crosswalks for College Street as developed by Amherst College and Berkshire Design Associates. The second phase of this work allowed the College to incorporate improvements to the original design that was installed the previous year. A combination of change in

materials and grade, along with signage and signal lights, make this area much safer for all pedestrians.

Pomeroy Village Center Design – The DRB continues to review progress and designs for this important village center in South Amherst.

North Pleasant Street Post Office Bus Stop – DRB reviewed streetscape designs for the relocation of the bus stop in front of the post office.

Permit Referrals from Other Boards – Several projects were presented to the DRB for review, including the new Blair Cutting Smith Building on University Drive and new construction on West Street near Pomeroy Lane. The Board remains committed to fostering the development of public space throughout the Town and assisting other boards in any way possible.

Private Projects

FY 04 saw continued improvement of existing commercial space adjacent to the Boltwood Parking Garage, in addition to improvements to the Emily Dickinson Homestead.

Monkey Bar – A new fence enclosure for a waste disposal and recycling center was added to the recent addition of the Monkey Bar fronting on Boltwood Parking area.

Judie's – A new awning, railing and lighting were added to the front façade of this well established restaurant.

Bueno y Sano – A new awning was added to the existing building and a new outdoor dining area was created on Boltwood Walk.

Thai Corner – A new handicap access ramp was added to the west side entry of the restaurant located on Boltwood Walk.

Signs

FY 04 sign reviews included: Rao's Coffee, H2O, Fatzo's Burgers (new awning and sign), Black Sheep (new awning), Ritz Camera (new projecting sign), Lone Wolf, Raven Books, Captain Video, Amherst Crepes (new awning and sign), The Toy Box (new sign) Bistro 63 the Monkey Bar (new directory sign), Mom's Tattoo Parlor (new hanging sign), Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream Shop, and The Men's Resource Center (new freestanding informational sign). A new signage system was implemented for the Emily Dickinson Homestead site.

Erica Gees AIA
Design Review Board